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ABSTRACT

The task undertaken in this research was to extend the Curry-Picou Goal Deflection Model by introducing additional variables. Variables considered were main breadwinner's occupation, race, family structure, birth order, goal blockage, significant other influence, self-image, and anticipatory occupational goal deflection (AOGD). Data were collected from a 3-wave panel of 134 East Texas rural male youths over a 6-year period. Group-administered questionnaires were given to the subjects in 1966, when the subjects were in the 10th grade; again in 1968; and in 1972, when personal interviews were used on the original respondents, who were by this time 4 years beyond expected high school completion. Major findings included that race was seen to be a statistically significant variable in the data from all 3 years; that the 1972 model explained 12% of the variance; and that the explanatory power of the model seems to increase over time. It was suggested that AOGD is related to realism in the status attainment process and that further research from that perspective might prove fruitful. (PS)

SELF-IMAGE, GOAL BLOCKAGE, SIGNIFICANT OTHER INFLUENCE, AND ANTICIPATORY OCCUPATIONAL GOAL DEFLECTION*

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SELF-IMAGE, GOAL BLOCKAGE, SIGNIFICANT OTHER INFLUENCE, AND ANTICIPATORY OCCUPATIONAL GOAL DEFLECTION

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Research into the occupational choice process and the occupational status projections of adolescents has a long history well catalogued by Kuvlesky and Ohlendorf (1967). Occupational choice is most often researched by sociologists as a developmental process (Ginzberg, et al., 1951; Blau, et al., 1956; Super, 1957; Rodgers, 1966; Musgrave, 1967). This perspective maintains that as the individual matures, he goes through a series of stages during which his occupational choice becomes more realistic. It is theorized that occupational choice starts fairly early in a child's life and continues on into adulthood.

Two of the elemental concepts which have received extensive treatment in the study of occupational choice are aspirations and expectations. These two dimensions have been conceptually differentiated by a number of authors (Blau, et al., 1956; Stephension, 1957; Glick, 1963; Kuvlesky and Bealer, 1966; Rehberg, 1967). For Kuvlesky and Bealer, three components of aspiration are delineated: (1) a chooser or selector element; (2) a wanting or desiring element; and (3) an occupational goal element. There are also three components delineated for expectations; (1) a chooser or selector element; (2) an expectation or anticipation element; and (3) an occupational role. The primary difference between the two concepts is found in the orientation toward an occupation. A person's occupational aspiration is generally thought to be either

postive or negative; the person need not necessarily desire the occupation which he actually expects (as opposed to aspires) to enter.

When aspirations and expectations are viewed as separable and conceptually distinguishable, then it is also possible to study any difference that exists between the two concepts. The difference that exists has been termed"anticipatory occupational goal deflection" (Kuvlesky, 1966; Kuvlesky and Bealer, 1966). This difference was also noted in an earlier paper by Glick (1963) in which he discussed "anticipatory occupational frustration." In either case, what can be studied is the observed difference, if any, that occurs between aspirations and expectations. If the person has a higher aspiration than expectation, then he is said to have negative deflection. He is said to have positive deflection when his expectation is higher than his aspiration (Ohlendorf and Kuvlesky, 1968).

While there has been voluminous research on the general topic of occupational choice, and consequently on that part of the status attainment process, there is a marked absence of research which integrates the goal deflection variable into the study of the status attainment process. Many researchers studying the status attainment process have given attention to variables which are antecedent to status attainment. Examples of these are such sociological factors as family size, socio-economic status, place of residence, mental ability, etc. (For an extensive bibliography of these references, see Kuvlesky and Reynolds, 1970). However, only in recent years has Anticipatory Occupational Goal Deflection (AOGD) become a focus for research, and its explanatory power, as a component of the status attainment process, has yet to be fully discussed or realized.

Researchers have empirically demonstrated that AOGD is a measurable

phenomenon (Slocum 1956; Glick, 1964; Nunalee and Drabick, 1965; Ameen, 1967; Ohlendorf and Kuvlesky, 1968; Lever 1969; Kuvlesky, Wright, and Juarez, 1969; Cosby, 1970; Curry, 1970; Cosby and Picou, 1971; Curry and Picou, 1971). A summary of the findings of these studies was reported in Curry and Picou (1971) and we cite it here:

1. AOGD has occurred among 33-45% of the respondents sampled.
2. Negative AOGD occurs more often than positive AOGD.
3. Significant differences in proportions of youth experiencing AOGD are not to be found between races or sexes.
4. An inverse relationship appears to exist between S.E.S. and AOGD.

PROBLEM

While there has been some empirical work which demonstrated the existence of AOGD, there has been very little research reported which attempted to explain the dynamics of AOGD; this was borne out by the fact that most of the studies reported had limited their analyses to one-wave data sets and descriptive statistics. Only two studies of which we were aware report analysis based on multivariate techniques (Han, 1969; Curry and Picou, 1971), and then the explanations were only partial. For the purpose of this paper, the most relevant model developed thus far was that reported by Curry and Picou (1971).

The Curry-Picou model utilized two multi-variate techniques -- least squares analysis of variance and path analysis -- to analyze data collected on a sample of rural Louisiana high school seniors. The model developed used two exogenous variables -- father's education and breadwinner's occupation -- and one endogenous variable -- goal impedance -- in an attempt to explain AOGD (the dependent variable).

As the authors stated, the path diagrams indicated that "these models possess relatively little explanatory power..." (Curry and Picou, 1971: 326). In fact, only three percent of the total variance was explained by the model.

The problem of the present research was to experiment with and expand the Curry-Picou model by introducing a set of additional explanatory variables. Experimentation with the extended model was carried out by applying it to a three-wave rural youth panel. This allowed an estimate of the power of the model successively at the sophomore, senior, and post high school periods. Thus, the task addressed here was (1) to expand the Curry-Picou model and (2) to apply the model at three different developmental phases.

DATA COLLECTION

The data utilized in this analysis were obtained from a three-wave panel of East Texas rural youth over a six-year period. The panel utilized in the present study consisted of 134 males. Data collection procedures for each wave were as follows:

(a) Wave I (Spring, 1966). Group administered questionnaires were given to all tenth-grade high school students present the day of the interview. The high schools selected were in three counties which were classified as 100% rural according to the 1960 census.

(b) Wave II (Spring, 1968). A second contact was made with the respondents previously interviewed in 1966. The majority of the Wave II data was collected by again using group-administered interview schedules with the items contained in this period worded the same as the previous period. Attempts were also made to contact those respondents who had either moved from their original counties or who had dropped out of

school, personal interviews and/ or mailed questionnaires were used with these respondents. Eighty-nine percent of the Wave I panel was interviewed by these combined techniques. Panel attrition was largely attributed to scholastic dropouts -- approximately one-half of the Wave II losses were high school drop-outs.

(c) Wave III (Summer-Fall, 1972). The third contact was made in 1972 when the original respondents were four years beyond expected high school completion. These measures for this period were primarily obtained by personal interview. Mailed questionnaires and telephone interviews were used for a minority (15%) of the respondents who were not interviewed by the primary method. Approximately 92% of the Wave II panel were recontacted by all methods. The principal cause of panel attrition appeared to be out-of-state migration and military service.

VARIABLES

Main Breadwinner's Occupation (X_1). This background variable was a rating of the main breadwinner's occupation -- be the main breadwinner mother, father, aunt, grandfather, or whomever -- as measured on the socioeconomic index developed by Duncan (1961).

Race (X_2). This was quantified as white = 1 and black = 2.

Family Structure (X_3). This was operationalized as a dichotomous variable so that both parents alive and living together was scored as a 1; all others were scored as a 2.

Birth Order (X_4). This was defined such that first born and only child = 1, all others = 2.

Goal Blockage (X_5). This consisted of asking the respondent the

question, "How much effect do you think each of the following things will have in keeping you from getting the job you desire?" The items then listed were:

1. Not enough money to go to technical school or college.
2. The school I have gone to.
3. Lack of parents' interest.
4. My race.
5. Don't want to move.
6. Good jobs are getting too scarce in the U.S.
7. Lack of good job opportunities in or near my community.
8. No technical school or college nearby.
9. Don't know enough about the opportunities that exist.
10. Not smart enough.

For each item a response ranging in strength from 1 to 4 was given thus yielding an aggregate score for the ten items ranging from a possible low of 10 to a possible high of 40.

Significant other Influence (X_6). This consisted of asking the respondent the question: "How helpful have each of the following people and things been in helping you to decide what job you would most like to have?" Only the responses for parents, friends, high school counselors, teachers, and relatives other than parents were used. This yielded an aggregate score which could range from a possible low of 5 to a possible high of 20.

Self Image (X_7). This was ascertained by asking the respondent about five aspects of three dimensions of self-image. The dimensions and their corresponding aspects were: (1) physical status -- energetic, strong, attractive, athletic, graceful; (2) academic ability -- talented, successful, thorough, capable, intelligent; and (3) social

relations -- cooperative, dynamic, accepted, popular, self-confident. Possible aggregate scores ranged from a low of 15 to a high of 45, depending on agreement with the items.

Anticipatory Occupational Goal Deflection (X_8). The Duncan index was used to assign scores to the respondents stated aspirations and expectations. These could range from a low of 1 to a high of 99. The real difference between these constituted AOGD and could range from -98 to +98.

Not all of the variables were measured at three points in time. Main breadwinner's occupation, race, family structure, and birth order were all determined in 1966 and then held as constants. Items on self-image were only obtained in 1966 and thus information on this variable was only available at one point in time. Data was collected on all other variables at each of the three points in time.

THE MODEL

As stated previously in this report, the task undertaken was to extend the Curry-Picou Goal Deflection Model by introducing additional variables. It was anticipated that by including new background variables such as race, family structure, and birth order a more comprehensive assessment of the effects of disparity in background on both the intervening social psychological variables and AOGD could be ascertained. Thus it was expected that each background variable would potentially exert both an indirect effect upon AOGD through the various intervening variables and a direct effect upon AOGD. Second, two additional intervening variables (significant other influence and self-image), that potentially would mediate the influence of the background variable on AOGD, were also introduced.

These modificantions of the Curry-Picou Model resulted in the more complex path digram presented in Figure 1.

Thus, several assumptions were made: (A) the various background variables (X_1, X_2, X_3, and X_4) were assumed to be antecedent to both the intervening variables (X_5, X_6, and X_7) and to AOGD (X_8); (B) there was a one-directional influence between variables, therefore, no reciprocal relationships were analyzed; (C) residual variables were not intercorrelated; (D) all relationships between variables were linear and additive; and (E) the assumptions necessary for standard mutliple regression were made.

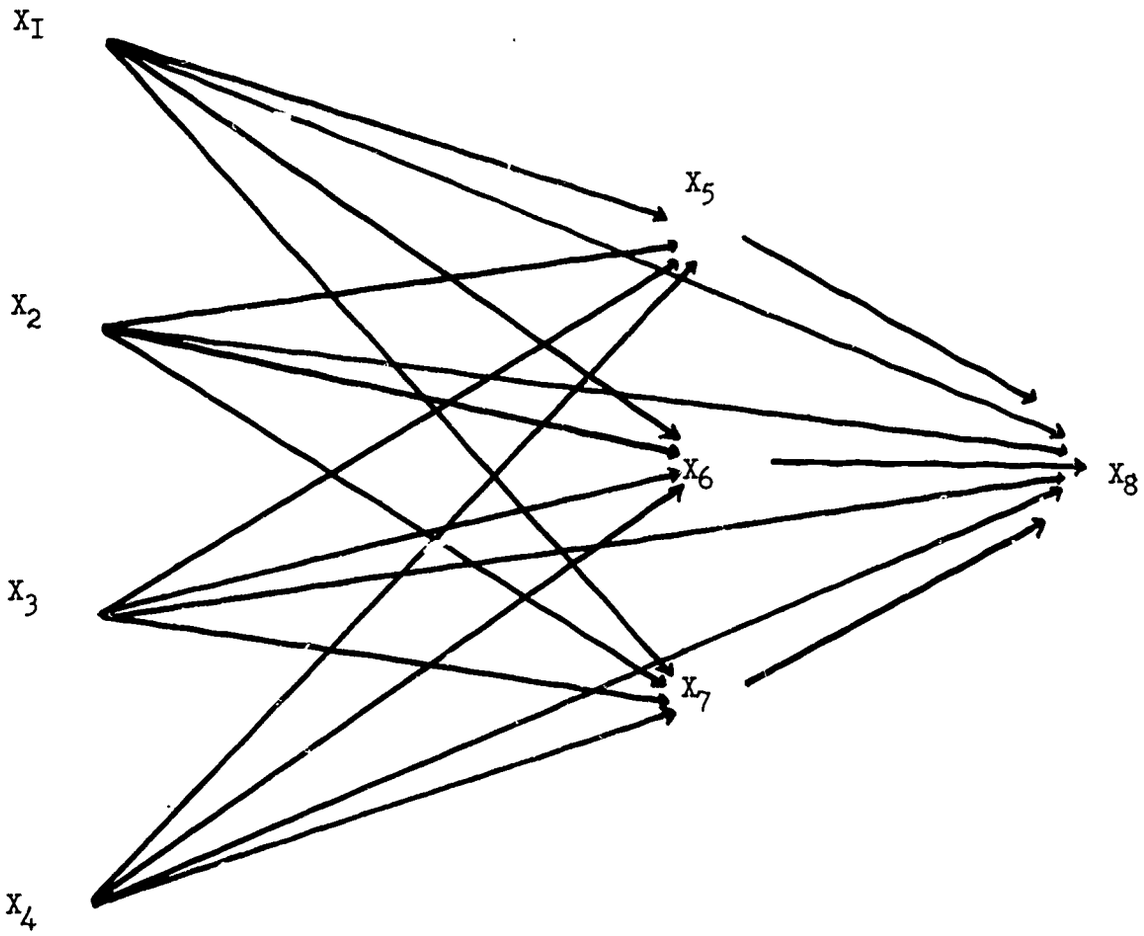
LIMITATIONS

Generalizations of findings and interpretations reported in this paper should be made with caution for several apparent reasons. First, the sample design used to obtain the subjects in the panel was based on purposed procedures. Schools in three 100% rural Texas counties were selected with the intent of focusing on rural youth. While this obviously was not in itself a limitation, generalization to broader populations has no scholastic base and thus is a risky endeavor.

Second, the use of path analytic procedures carried with it the usual limitations. For example, attention should be drawn to the three causal paths between goal blockage, significant other influence, self-image and AOGD. The model assumes that the first three (X_5, X_6, X_7) were antecedent to AOGD (X_8) and that there were no effects between X_5, X_6, and X_7. In both cases the assumption can easily be questioned. Futhermore, it was apparent that other path arrangements would have been equally plausible. For example, it is not difficult to think of AOGD being antecedent to and exerting a

FIGURE I

THE MODIFIED OCCUPATIONAL GOAL DEFLECTION MODEL



X_I - MAIN BREADWINNER'S OCCUPATION

X_2 - RACE

X_3 - FAMILY STRUCTURE

X_4 - BIRTH ORDER

X_5 - GOAL BLOCKAGE

X_6 - SIGNIFICANT OTHER INFLUENCE

X_7 - SELF IMAGE

X_8 - ANTICIPATORY OCCUPATIONAL GOAL DEFLECTION

causal effect on self-image.

Third, the items used to solicit information on self-image and significant other influence have dubious face validity. That the self-image items were Likert-type, forced-choice items well illustrates the limited nature of the questions asked. We know that self-image is a far more complex phenomenon than the questions could hope to ascertain; thus the limited nature of the questions validity. Additionally, self-image was not measured at three points in time. We had data on self-image only as measured when the respondents were approximatly age 16 and sophomores in high school. While this was a limitation, it also provided a test of the effect of self-image measured at one point in time upon AOGD observed at three different points.

The limitation to the significant other influence item was with the limited nature of the question asked. The question did not really ascertain how much of an influence the significant other may have been. Other researchers (Sewell, Haller and Portes, 1969; Sewell, Haller, and Ohlendorf, 1971) have shown the potential importance of significant other influence and present research by Haller has begun to indicate the complexity of this variable. Thus, our measure of significant other influence was superficial, at best.

RESULTS

Our results will be discussed in three ways: (1) relationships between exogenous variables and endogenous variables; (2) relationships between exogenous variables and the dependent variable, AOGD; and (3) relationships between the endogenous variables and the dependent variable, AOGD. The discussion of relationships somewhat extraneous to our pirmary interests will be found in the following section, "Discussion."

Even a cursory examination of the model constructed for 1966 reveals the rather generally weak relationships between all variables. Only two relationships between exogenous and endogenous variables were found to be significant, and both of these had race as the exogenous variable. The relationship between race and significant other influence did obtain statistical significance and the relationships between race and self-image was statistically significant.

As one would expect given the weak individual relationships, the total explained variance for the endogenous variables and the dependent variable was also small. The effect of all exogenous variables on goal blockage could only explain three percent of the variance. Similarly only nine percent of the variance observed for significant other influence and seven percent for self-image could be explained by the total effect of the exogenous variables. The total explained variance of the dependent variable, considering all exogenous and endogenous effects, was only one percent; the best example of the seemingly weak explanatory power of the model.

For the model constructed using 1968 data where possible, again, little explanatory power was evident. However, certain observations about the model are warranted. Race was again found to be of statistical significance, however somewhat differently than in the 1966 model. A highly significant statistical relationship was found between race and goal blockage; this relationship was not observed in the 1966 model. However, the relationship which was observed in the 1966 model between race and significant other influence was absent from the 1968 model. Another relationship of statistical significance which was observed was that between birth order and goal deflection; a relationship with a negative value.

Aside from the relationships just mentioned, the remainder of the relationships were again weak. However, one additional comment is in order. While the total explained variance for significant other influence decreased from 1966 to 1968, the total explained variance for goal blockage did increase. Perhaps of greater importance was that the increase in the total effect of the model was to explain six percent of the variance not explained in the 1966 model.

The model constructed using 1972 data where possible also exhibits generally weak relationships between most variables. However, race again is shown to be a statistically significant variable. A highly significant statistical relationship was observed between race and significant other influence and a significant statistical relationship was observed between race and goal blockage. One additional relationship of statistical significance was also observed -- the relationship between goal blockage and goal deflection. Further, the relationship between main breadwinner's socioeconomic index score and goal deflection was a relatively strong one (P .08)

Comparative analysis of the model used with data from three points in time reveals one finding of interest -- the explanatory power of the model seems to increase over time. Not only do most of the individual relationships gain in strength (although we admit that most of the gains are minimal), but more importantly, all of the relationships between exogenous variables and AOGD, with the exception of one, increase in strength. And even the one exception (birth order) shows an increase in strength when comparing 1966 to 1972. All of the relationships between endogenous variables and AOGD show increase in strenth.

As one would predict, knowing the individual increases, the total explained variance of the model also shows consistent increases over time. In fact, the 1972 model explains 12 percent of the variance. While 12 percent explained variance is still admittedly small, it is nonetheless a substantial increase over the one percent explained in 1966 and, at the least, another five percent greater than was explained in 1968. Thus, whereas the utility of including the additional variables in the main exploratory model might have seemed somewhat futile after analysis using 1966 data, this may not be the case after all.

DISCUSSION

We can conclude from the work done thus far on AOGD, including our own, that AOGD still remains a very elusive phenomenon. The purpose of the present study was to see if the explanatory power of extant path models could be made greater by the addition of variable not previously utilized. To that end, this study's initial assumptions were correct -- the power of previous models is expanded. Whereas Curry and Picou explained only 3 percent of the total variance, the model used in the present study succeeds in explaning 12 percent of the total variance (in 1972), even though the present model did not use one of the variables in the Curry-Picou model.

However the findings of the present study really give us little reason to crow. Our orginal intent was to add to the body of literature on AOGD by including previously excluded variables in seeking an explanation of AOGD. This we have done, albeit with a minimum of success. Our main finding becomes more a matter what we don't know rather than what we do know (at least this is true in a rather negative perspective).

That is, we still cannot adequately explain the dynamics operative in the determination of AOGD, although much improvement has been made in understanding AOGD's most crucial constituent parts -- aspirations and expectations.

To date, the only work we are aware of in the study of AOGD is of an empirical nature. Our knowledge of the literature on status attainment recalls no work which really discusses the theoretical basis of the concept, nor any work which gives more than passing mention to its place within the larger sociological perspective. In short, the rather broad question "To what end do we study AOGD?" may be sorely in need of an answer. At present, the fact that Kuvlesky, Cosby, Curry and Picou and others have given some empirical attention to AOGD has been enough to make of it a reified, researchable phenomenon. However, unless certain questions are raised about AOGD, unless some attempts are made to theorize about it, and unless some attempts are made to perhaps more adequately conceptualize AOGD, and in the process give it meaning relative to the sociological frame of reference, then the empirical work done on AOGD may result in little real sociological contribution.

As is theory meaningless without empirical work, so too is empirical work meaningless without theory. In the present study we have tried to further the empirical work on AOGD so that it is made a more understandable phenomenon. Since our efforts contribute to past efforts which find it difficult to explain the dynamics of AOGD, it may be that the next logical step for researchers interested AOGD is one of giving more concern to its theoretical basis and importance. Our understanding of AOGD suggests to us that it is related to realism in the status

attainment process, and further research from this perspective may yield fruitful results. Curry (1972) has begun research on AOGD relating it to the broader perspective of "anticipatory success." Perhaps as other researchers seek explanation and understanding of AOGD, its real utility will become more apparent and its importance in the research process will become more easily estimable.

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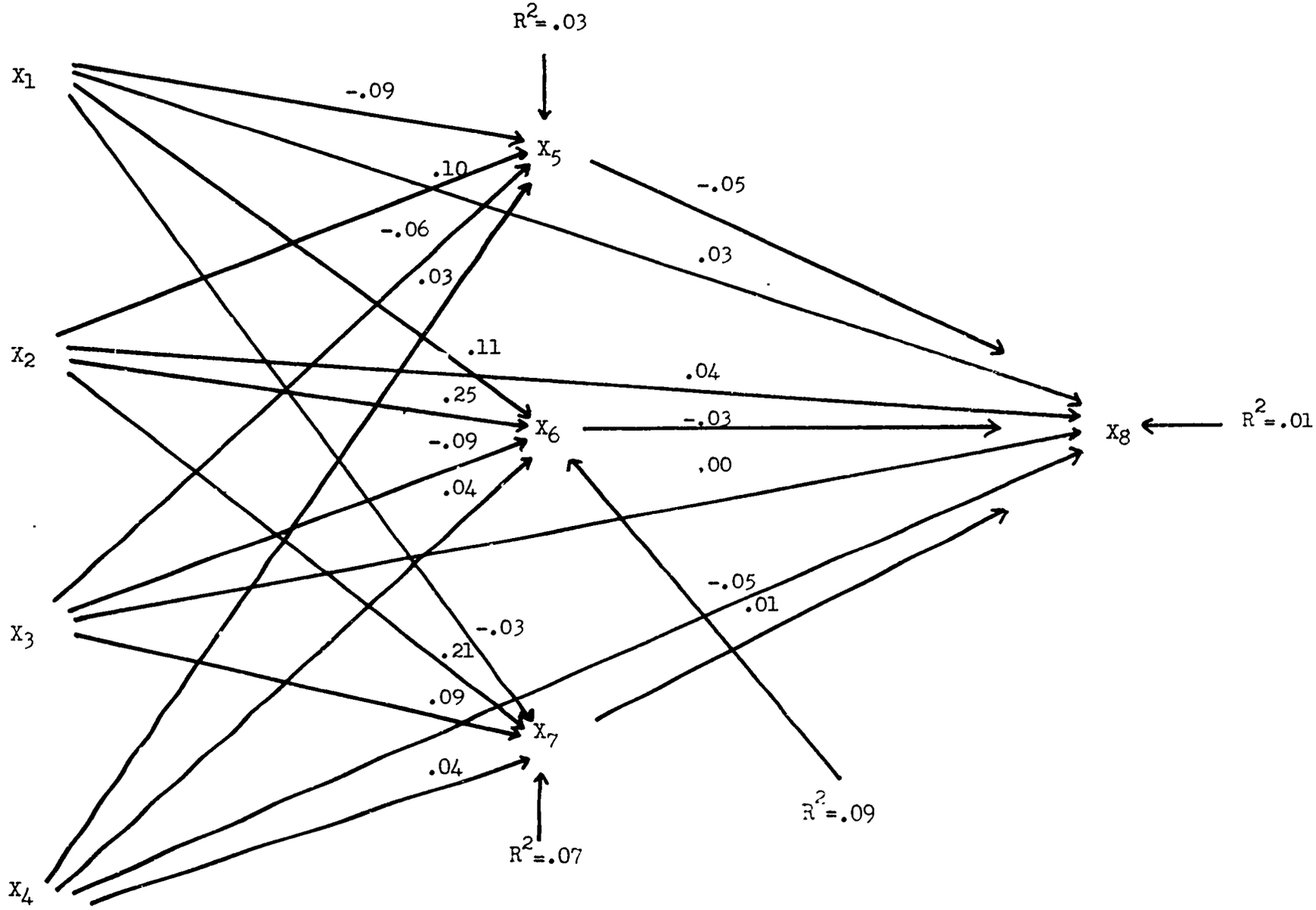
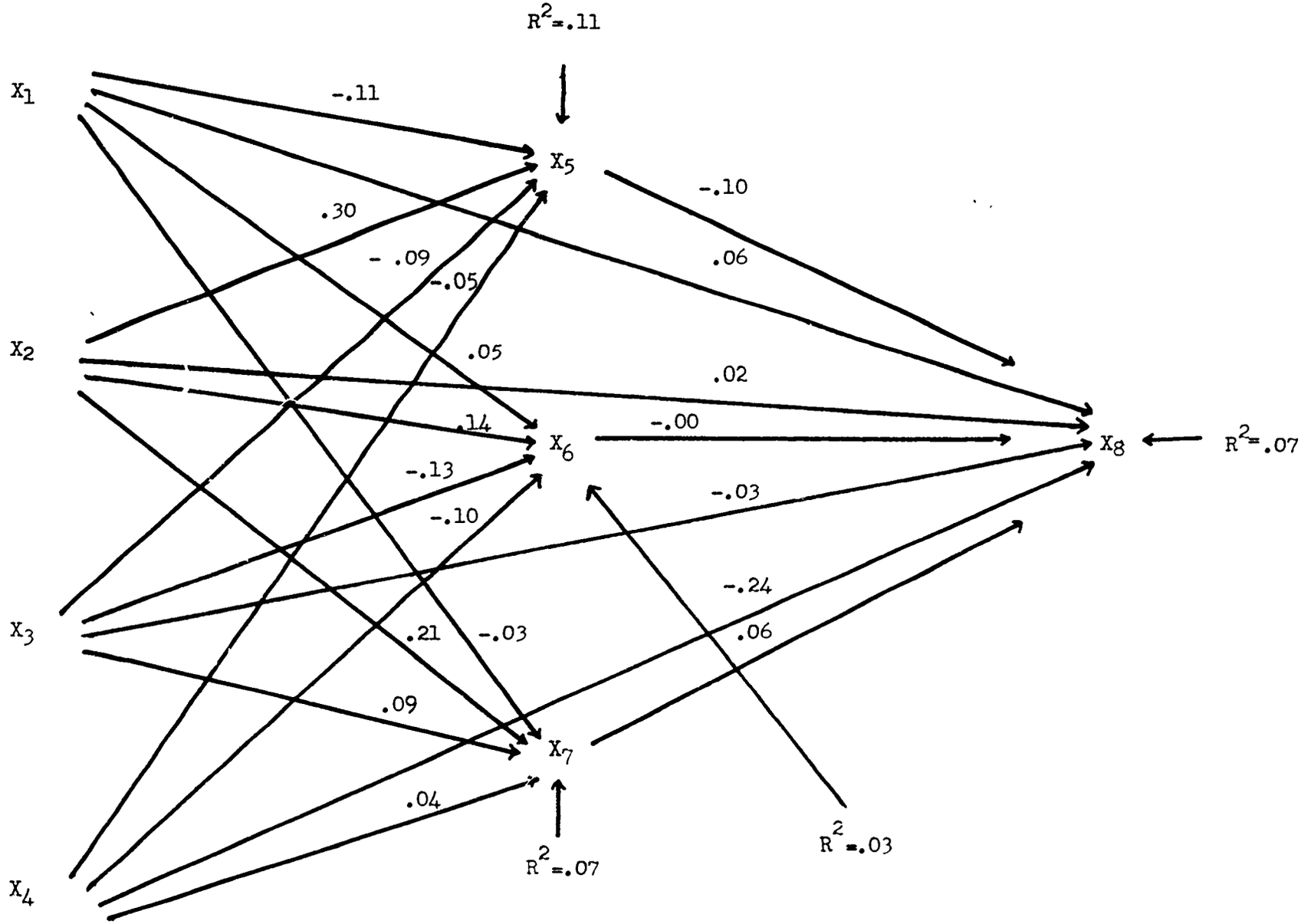
APPENDIX

THE MODIFIED OCCUPATIONAL GOAL DEFLECTION MODEL (1966)



THE MODIFED OCCUPATIONAL GOAL DEFLECTION MODEL (1968)



THE MODIFIED OCCUPATIONAL GOAL DEFLECTION MODEL (1972)

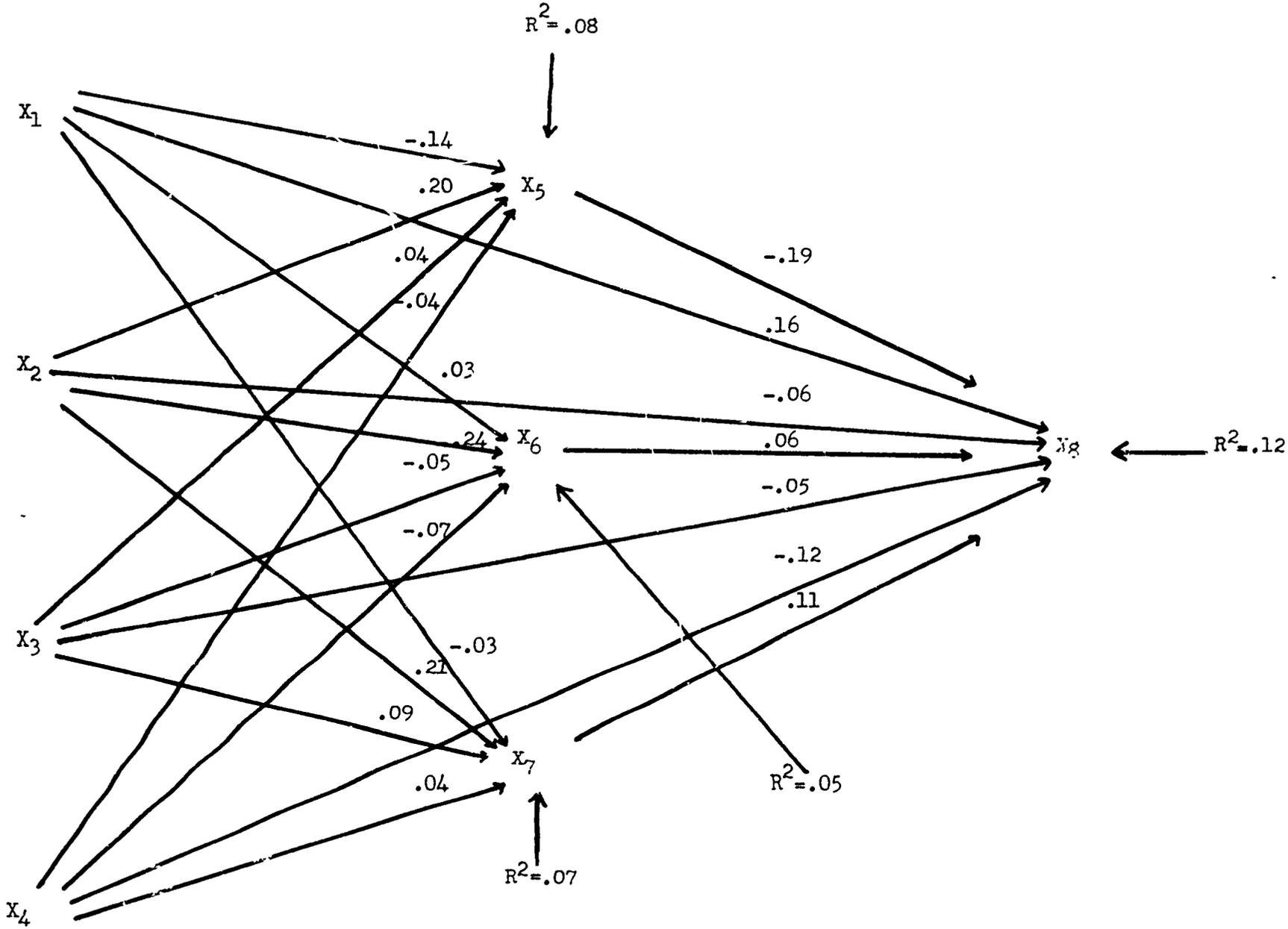


Table I. Means and Standard Deviations

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Breadwinner's Occupation	25.09	21.10
Self-Image (1966)	32.90	4.58
Goal Blockage (1966)	17.25	4.78
Goal Blockage (1968)	15.87	3.96
Goal Blockage (1972)	15.00	4.03
Significant Other (1966)	12.69	3.74
Significant Other (1968)	14.46	6.09
Significant Other (1972)	12.47	3.55
Aspiration (1966)	50.34	24.95
Expectation (1966)	43.34	25.32
Aspiration (1968)	57.24	26.19
Expectation (1968)	48.62	26.95
Aspiration (1972)	53.29	25.39
Expectation (1972)	42.66	24.15
Goal Deflection (1966)	-7.03	21.91
Goal Deflection (1968)	-9.13	22.33
Goal Deflection (1972)	-10.81	23.23

Table II. Correlation Matrix of Exogenous Variables

	X_1	X_2	X_3	X_4
X_1	1.000	-0.341**	-0.179*	-0.059
X_2		1.000	0.256**	0.261**
X_3			1.000	-0.065
X_4				1.000

X_1 = Breadwinner's Occupation

X_2 = Race

X_3 = Family Structure

X_4 = Birth Order

*Significant at .05 level

**Significant at .01 level

TABLE III
Correlation
Matrix

	Breadwinners Occupation	Race	Family Structure	Birth Order	Self Image (1966)	Goal Block-age (1966)	Goal Block-age (1968)	Goal Block-age (1972)	Significant Other (1966)	Significant Other (1968)	Significant Other (1972)	Goal Deflec-tion (1966)	Goal Deflec-tion (1968)	Goal Deflec-tion (1972)
Breadwinner's Occupation	1.000	-.341**	-.179*	-.059	-.117	-.119	-.203*	-.215**	-.183	.035	-.035	032	.088	.219**
Race	-	1.000	.256**	.261**	.249**	.125	.307**	.247**	.272**	.059	.201*	.006	-.083	-.163
Family Structure	-	-	1.000	-.065	.149	-.016	.016	.113	-.010	-.097	.007	.010	-.007	-.085
Birth Order	-	-	-	1.000	.089	.067	.041	.023	.117	-.055	.000	-.043	-.230**	-.138
Self Image (1966)	-	-	-	-	1.000	-.117	-.050	.132	.153	.093	.179*	.013	.040	.046
Goal Blockage (1966)	-	-	-	-	-	1.000	.194*	.238**	.106	.028	-.009	-.054	-.111	-.185*
Goal Blockage (1968)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.000	.312**	.159	.066	-.033	-.042	-.123	-.084
Goal Blockage (1972)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.000	.243**	.135	.069	-.027	.016	-.225**
Significant Other (1966)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.000	.150	.246**	-.034	.010	-.131
Significant Other (1968)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.000	.252**	.076	.015	.001
Significant Other (1972)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.000	.045	-.019	.044
Goal Deflection (1966)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.000	.059	-.068
Goal Deflection (1968)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.000	.156
Goal Deflection (1972)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.000

*Significant at .05 level
**Significant at .01 level

TABLE IV

Path Coefficients

	Self Image (1966)	Goal Blockage (1966)	Goal Blockage (1968)	Goal Blockage (1972)	Significant Other (1966)	Significant Other (1968)	Significant Other (1972)	Goal Deflection (1966)	Goal Deflection (1968)	Goal Deflection (1972)
Breadwinner's Occupation	-.03	-.09	-.12	-.14	-.11	.05	.03	.03	.06	.16
Race	.21*	.10	.30**	.20*	.25**	.14	.24**	.04	.02	-.06
Family Structure	.09	-.06	-.09	.04	-.09	-.13	-.05	.00	-.03	-.05
Birth Order	.04	.03	-.05	-.04	-.04	-.10	-.07	-.05	-.24**	-.12
Self Image (1966)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.01	.06	.11
Goal Blockage (1966)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.05	-	-
Goal Blockage (1968)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.10	-
Goal Blockage (1972)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.19*
Significant Other (1966)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.03	-	-
Significant Other (1968)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-.00	-
Significant Other (1972)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	.06

*Significant at .05 level
**Significant at .01 level